

★★ FOURTH CIRCUIT ★★

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

2020 Student Essay Contest



2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, extending the right to vote to women and expanding on the principle of equality.

**What barriers remain today in exercising the right to vote?
What changes, if any, would you make to protect or expand voting rights?**

Who May Enter

The essay contest is open to all students currently in grades 9 through 12 from Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Note: Children, grandchildren, stepchildren, and members of the household of a federal judge or federal judiciary employee are excluded from the competition.

Length & Format

Essays are limited to **1,000 words**. Citations should be placed in footnotes, endnotes, or bibliographies and excluded from the word count. Submit your essay as a Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF document. Do not include your name on your essay.

Submission Deadline

Your essay and contest entry form must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on **Wednesday, April 15, 2020**. Go to **www.ca4.uscourts.gov/essay-contest** to complete the contest entry form and for instructions on submitting your essay.

Judging

- Understanding of constitutional principles (30 points)
- Clarity and effectiveness in expressing the theme (30 points)
- Grammar, spelling, and composition (20 points)
- Originality (20 points)

Missing the submission deadline, providing false entry information, not adhering to the rules, and plagiarizing content are grounds for disqualification

Awards

Winners will be announced in July, and travel will be provided to the court's Essay Awards Program in September 2020.



Questions

Contact the Fourth Circuit Clerk's Office at **essaycontest@ca4.uscourts.gov** or (804) 916-2706.



<https://www.ca4.uscourts.gov/essay-contest>